Introduction of CAS

*199. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that introduction of CAS scheduled for September, 2003 has been postponed further;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by Government to prevent cable operators from charging fee at will; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure uniform charges in metros within the maximum limit beyond approved rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Government had notified the introduction of Conditional Access System (CAS) *w.e.f.* 15th July, 2003 in four metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. Subsequently, through another notification, CAS was sought to be implemented in zone-wise manner in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai in one go *w.e.f.* 1st September, 2003. CAS was, however, denotified in Delhi on 29th August, 2003. This matter was challenged before Delhi High Court, which has, on 4th December, 2003, quashed the Ministry's notification, denotifying the introduction of CAS in Delhi. There are several cases in other Law Courts in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, concerning the implementation of CAS.

CAS has been implemented in Chennai, whereas in respect of Kolkata and Mumbai certain concerns were expressed by the State Governments. The State Governments have been requested to constitute State level Committee to discuss various issues and concerns arising out of the implementation of CAS. The West Bengal Government has already constituted such a Committee and its first meeting is scheduled to be held on 15th December, 2003. The Centre also interacted with the State Governments.

(c) and (d) The Government has specified, through a notification dated 7th May, 2003 (copy available on Ministry's website-*http://www.mib.nic.in*), Rs. 72/- (plus local taxes), as maximum price of basic service tier consisting of not less than 30 free to air channels of different genres of

entertainment, news, sports, children programmes and music. Under the provisions of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 as amended up to date, the overcharging by cable operators over and above the rates fixed by the Government for free to air channels will constitute a cognizable offence.

The provisions of the aforesaid Act and the rules made thereunder do not regulate the prices of pay channels. The variation in rates of pay channels from one MSO to another cannot be ruled out. However, the cable operators are required to publicise as per rules, the rates payable by the viewers for each pay channel provided by the operator.

Cruise terminals in coastal areas of Karnataka

*200. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up cruise terminals in the coastal areas of Karnataka between Mangalore and Karwar; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

New grain export policy

1233. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new grain export policy requires the exporter to buy grains directly from market;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the device of transportation and storage of the grains before export;

(c) whether any studies have been conducted on the impact of this